

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MUNICIPAL GARDENS CELEBRATING 50 YEARS OF JUNIOR BASKETBALL

Open House reunites former coaches, players of longtime mentoring program

INDIANAPOLIS – (February 20, 2009) Catch up with the coaches and mentors who created the legacy of Municipal Gardens Junior Basketball at its 50th anniversary celebration this weekend. Drop by the family center, 1831 Lafayette Road, from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 21. Many of the center's volunteer coaches were youth participants in the program and have been coaching for 20 years or more.

The 165 current participants are divided into three age groups – 8-9, 10-11, and 12-13. Registration fees cover a T-shirt, referees for the games and a trophy at season's end. Willie Gupton, Municipal Gardens' park manager who grew up playing at the center, said the league's volunteer coaches are men who played at Municipal Gardens during the 1960s, '70s, '80s and '90s who are now professionals inspiring a new generation of children.

"It gives young people a chance to be around solid role models in a safe setting and learn not only basketball skills but also life skills," said Gupton. "The beauty of our program is that it's grassroots – it's a group of men getting together to work with young people to improve their quality of life."

Make your weekend a slam dunk by dropping by the open house celebration!

What: 50th Anniversary of Municipal Gardens Junior Basketball

Where: Municipal Gardens Family Center, 1831 Lafayette Road

When: Saturday, Feb. 21, 2009

- ❖ 1 p.m. – Indianapolis Mayor Greg Ballard tosses jump ball in league playoff game with surprise visit by Indiana Pacers mascot Bowser
- ❖ 1:30 p.m. – 2:45 p.m. Welcome and mingle with current and former coaches
- ❖ 2:45 p.m. – 3:15 p.m. Slide show highlighting history of Gardens Junior Basketball
- ❖ 3:15 p.m. – 3:35 p.m. History of Gardens Basketball 1958-1980: Founder Jack Evans
History of Gardens Basketball 1970-present: Eric Gordon Sr.
- ❖ 3:35 p.m. – 4:15 p.m. Remarks from past Gardens staff, coaches and players including Don Stout and Red Taylor
- ❖ 4:15 p.m. Keynote from Columbus Byers, Gardens Junior Basketball president

For more information about Municipal Gardens, call (317) 327-7190.

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